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SC ASKS SAMAY RAINA, 4 OTHERS TO APOLOGISE FOR DISABILITY JOKES

Supreme Court asked 5 social media influencers to display their apology in their shows for ridiculing persons with disabilities and rare genetic disorders

PENALTY TO BE CONSIDERED LATER, SAYS COURT

A bench of justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi said the degree of repentance should be higher than the degree of offending and made it clear that the court would later consider imposing a penalty on the influencers—Samay Raina, Sonali Thakkar, Vipul Goyal, Balraj Paramjeet Singh Ghai, and Nishant Jagdish Tanwar—for offending disabled persons

COMMERCIAL CONTENT IS NOT FREE SPEECH

- The five influencers are accused of making fun of the disabled, and those suffering from spinal muscular atrophy and visual impairment
- Justice Bagchi said the influencers should be more cautious while creating humour, adding that those who use social media platforms to earn money can't label their commercial content as free speech

PETITION

AGAINST THE INFLUENCERS WAS FILED BY CURE SMA FOUNDATION OF INDIA

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Amazon, Flipkart data to help govt assess inflation

Statistics ministry to overhaul the way retail inflation data is collected and measured

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

IN a bid to make the official retail inflation data more updated and cognizant of the changes in household consumption patterns, the government is planning to effect major changes to the way the data is captured and measured.

As part of the overhaul, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), which publishes inflation data, will source data directly from e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart. The ministry will also update the inflation basket and base year.

MoSPI Secretary Saurabh Garg confirmed that the ministry will track prices from e-commerce platforms across 12 cities. He did not specify the criteria for selecting these cities but said they would be chosen on a random sampling basis. "Our effort is to collect data in a way that better represents the economy today," he said.

Earlier in the day, a Reuters report said the ministry plans to scrape prices from e-commerce sites in 12 cities with populations above 2.5 million. According to the report, e-commerce firms were told to share weekly average prices of goods with the government. These figures would be cross-checked against a broader dataset to guard against distortions. The objective is to build a more robust system for tracking retail inflation, given the rising share of e-commerce in household consumption. Estimates suggest that e-commerce sales touched $125 billion in FY24 and are projected to rise to $350 billion by FY30.

The government will also revise the base years. CPI's base year will shift to 2023-24, while the GDP's will be updated to 2022-23. Currently, both the GDP and CPI are calculated using 2011-12 as the base year. The CPI product basket is also set for expansion and rebalancing. The weight of food in the new basket will decline, as household consumption surveys from 2022-23 and 2023-24 show a smaller share of food in monthly expenditure compared to 2011-12. The number of items tracked will rise from 300 to 400.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

Given the rise in household spending on e-commerce platforms, capturing the latest online prices can improve the quality of retail inflation data. Around 27 crore Indians shopped online in 2024. The number is projected to rise 22% every year

SPENDING TRENDS

A recent consumption survey showed that Indians were spending a lower share of their budget on food expenses. To capture the new trend in consumption, the revamped CPI index could include airfares and streaming-media prices, reports said

AMID INDUS WATERS TREATY CHILL

INDIA ALERTS PAK ON POSSIBLE FLASH FLOODS

A damaged bridge following heavy rainfall in Jammu on Monday | PTI

Heavy rainfall warning

The IMD forecast extremely heavy rainfall across all regions of India for the next five days, following the monsoon trough's shift to its normal position

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

WITH the weather office issuing a red alert on Sunday predicting extreme rainfall over the next two days in J&K, India formally notified Pakistan about the potential risk of flash floods in the Tawi and Sutlej rivers as a gesture of good neighbourliness.

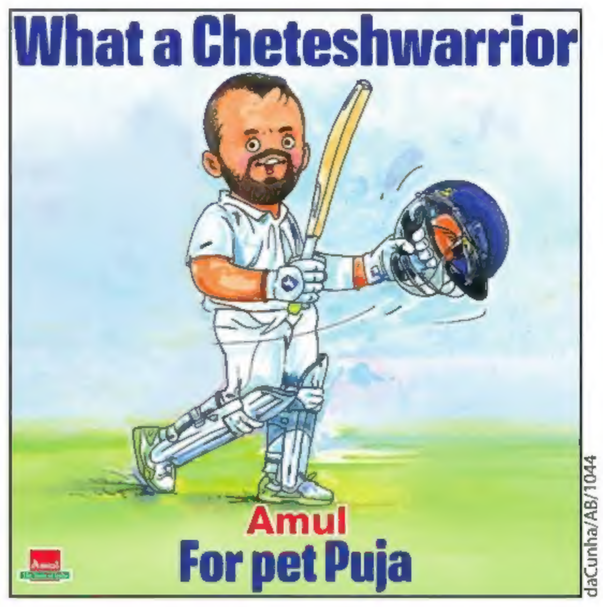
The alert was sent through diplomatic channels rather than the Indus Waters Treaty framework, since India placed the Treaty in abeyance shortly after the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22.

For its part, the Pakistan Foreign Office confirmed India's two alerts: on Sunday about the Tawi flooding, and on Monday on possible flash floods in the Sutlej.

Sources said that the alert was directly communicated to the Pakistani government through the Indian High Commission (IHC) there. The IHC reached out to the Pakistani Foreign Office, instead of routing the information through the Pakistan High Commission in Delhi.

The Jammu region experienced record rainfall on Sunday, significantly increasing water levels in the Tawi, which could lead to a flood disaster in Pakistan. The Tawi in Jammu is a tributary of the Chenab, flowing through Jammu city before joining the Chenab, which eventually flows into Pakistan. The Sutlej, on the other hand, flows entirely within India and joins the Indus in Pakistan.

On Sunday, Jammu experienced the second-highest rainfall in 99 years — about 191 mm of rainfall in 24 hours. The previous record was 228.6 mm on August 5, 1926, while the previous second-highest was 189.6 mm on August 11, 2022.



RAHUL MAMKOOTATHIL

CONG SUSPENDS PALAKKAD MLA

Move seen as a desperate face-saving measure following widespread clamour from different corners over a series of allegations of misconduct against Mamkootathil | P7

Paramour explodes detonator in woman's mouth

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

IN a horrific incident, a 20-year-old woman was brutally murdered by her lover, who put an electric detonator in her mouth and exploded it, in Bherya village of Saligrama taluk in Mysuru district. The accused initially tried to mislead people, claiming that she had died in a mobile phone blast.

The victim, Darshitha, who hailed from Gerasanahalli in Hunsur taluk, was the mother of a two-year-old girl. She was allegedly killed by her paramour Siddaraju BN (22), a hardware shop employee from Bilikere village in Periyapatna taluk. The two had been in a relationship for seven years.

Darshitha was married to Subhash AP from Kannur in Kerala, who works as a driver in Dubai. Taking advantage of her husband's absence, she frequently visited Mysuru to meet Siddaraju.

On August 22, Darshitha came to her village with her daughter. The following day, she met Siddaraju to visit Kappadi temple. Later, the two checked into a lodge in KR Nagar. During their stay, the couple quarrelled. Siddaraju tied an electric detonator to Darshitha's mouth and exploded it, killing her instantly, the police said.

Darshitha

Siddaraju BN

To cover up the crime, Siddaraju had closed the room door, which locked automatically. He stepped out pretending to buy food, and then returned with a parcel. As the door was locked, he asked the lodge staff to help open the room. When the staff broke open the door, they found Darshitha in a pool of blood. Siddaraju pretended to be shocked and claimed that the mobile phone blast may have killed her. He tried to shift the body to a hospital. But not convinced by his explanation, the lodge staff alerted the police, who arrived immediately.

When the police interrogated Siddaraju, he confessed to the murder, saying he had spent a large amount of money on Darshitha, but she had started avoiding him. Siddaraju said Darshitha wanted to end their relationship and move to Dubai to stay with her husband. P7

EXPRESS READ

TNIE Mysuru chief makes it to Cong's new MLC list

Bengaluru: The state Congress has picked a new quartet of candidates for the Legislative Council. K Shivakumar, senior journalist and Mysuru Bureau Chief of TNIE has been included in the new list | P4

Bike taxis suspended again across Karnataka

Bengaluru: After briefly resuming operations, bike taxi services on Ola and Uber have been suspended. The move came after the Karnataka HC clarified that it had not passed any order permitting the operations | P3

Delhi HC says 'personal info', chucks CIC's '16 fiat to disclose PM's degree

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Delhi High Court on Monday set aside a 2016 order of the Central Information Commission (CIC) that had directed the University of Delhi (DU) to disclose and allow inspection of records relating to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's bachelor's degree.

Justice Sachin Datta had reserved the judgment on February 27, pronounced the verdict on DU's plea challenging the CIC directive.

The dispute goes back to December 21, 2016, when the CIC permitted inspection of the records of all students who cleared the BA examination in 1978, the year the prime minister passed on applications filed under the Right to Information (RTI) Act by applicants, including RTI activist Neeraj Kumar and Mohd Irshad. Following DU's challenge, the high court stayed the CIC order on January 23, 2017.

Justice Datta, in his verdict, found no implicit public interest in the information sought under RTI, adding educational qualifications were not in the nature of any statutory requirement for holding any public office or discharging official responsibilities.

"It is unambiguously clear that the 'marks obtained', grades, answer sheets, etc., are in the nature of personal information and are protected under Section 8(1)) of the RTI Act, subject to an assessment of overriding public interest. The mere act of publishing certain information on some occasions does not dilute the legal protection accorded to personal information under Section 8(I) of the RTI Act," the court held.

The mother and her newborn carried by their family to reach an ambulance 1.5 km away in Belagavi district

Mother, newborn carried 1.5 km to reach ambulance

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Belagavi

IN a shocking incident, highlighting the plight of rural infrastructure, a new mother and her newborn were carried on shoulders for nearly 1.5 km after an ambulance failed to reach their house because of the pathetic condition of the road leading to their village. The incident occurred in Adahallatti village of Belagavi district.

Bheemashankar Naik's wife Shilpa developed labour pains on Friday. Even before the family could make arrangements to shift her, she delivered the baby at home. The family immediately called the 108 ambulance service to take the mother and child to the hospital. But the ambulance driver told the family that his vehicle cannot reach the house as the road is completely damaged. Left with no option, the family members carried Shilpa and the newborn on their shoulders and walked 1.5 km before reaching the waiting ambulance. Both mother and child were admitted to the hospital and they are healthy.

Angry with the incident, villagers berated authorities for neglecting infrastructure in their village. They pointed out that despite funds being sanctioned for road repairs, the work has not been undertaken. Residents demanded immediate action.

BCCI faces ₹1,000 crore shortfall as smaller cricket leagues suffer most

GOMESH S & SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

THE corridors of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) are no stranger to their sponsors facing significant headwinds. But they find themselves in the curious position of having to bring on board a sponsor for one of the most visible slots — title sponsor for all Indian teams embossed on the T-shirts — within a two-week period. With the men's team set to feature in the Asia Cup and the women's team featuring in a home 50-over World Cup within the next two months, they will not be short on offers (they are expected float a tender soon).

What, though, remains to be seen is if they will be able to make up for the shortfall on an immediate basis. The loss, brought about because of a policy change at the Centre related to real money gaming, could run into ₹1,000 crore. But the real loss will be known once the board ropes in new sponsors.

On Monday, board secretary **Devajit Saikia** confirmed to this mast that they have ceased associations with Dream11 or 'any other gaming agencies'. "BCCI cannot go with Dream11 or any other gaming agencies," he said. "They will not be part of the BCCI under the current legal system. We are deliberating what can be done to substitute their sponsorship slots. We will take a call soon."

Saikia was fairly intimate when asked if a communique has been sent out to all contracted players about the change in law, vis-a-vis endorsing real money gaming firms. "Everybody should be aware of the existing laws. Do I have to tell any player that they can't go and commit any murder? It is the same situation." While the top level of Indian cricket may cope with the headwind, all state-level T20 leagues are in a perilous situation. Several real money gaming firms sponsors these events at some level and they are struggling to find alternatives. It's in BCCI's interest to keep these leagues, which have unearthed several gems over the past few years, afloat. P17

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